231
435 Thus, the capital of our hypothetical "average" freehold farmer would total as follows:

3 good cows	150 MT	(ETH$225.-)
2 old cows	30 MT	45.-
2 strong oxen	80	120.-
2 old oxen	30 MT	45.-
2 donkeys	15 MT	22.-
1 mule	40 MT	60.-
6 sheep		30.-
3 goats		15.-
	Total ETH$562.-	(US$230)

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[231] Sales from livestock and livestock produce, in one year, by the average freehold farmer would be about as follows, providing ready cash:

2 old cows	ETH$45.-
1 old ox	20.-
3 sheep	15.-
10 chickens	3.-
300 eggs	3.-
50 kilos honey	50.-
Milk	5.-
	ETH$141.-

With this cash he would buy salt, raw cotton, a toga, some imported spices, coffee, and pay certain cash taxes such as the education tax. These would all be necessary expenditures. The rest would go for other items.

006 It is still tremendously difficult to make an accu-

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

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544 government has now made free injections available at "big markets" of provincial towns, Bedbugs are also prevalent, of the bloodsucking variety. They are considered a nussance by the Amhara, but all that is done is to air the "alga" bed in the sunlight, which merely reduces the infestation temporarily. Flies are also abundant and very aggressive, so that a flyswitch ("chera") is kept in motion for comfort. Contagious diseases spread readily. Just after each rainy season, malarial mosquitoes have caused epidemics up to levels of 5,000 feet, on the shore of overflowing lakes and rivers.

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[23] In the majority of cases, some livestock is taken into the living hut (tuqul) everynight. The tuqul has, of course, an unwashable mud floor, no windows or chimney, soot-blackened ceiling, cobwebs in corners. There is no change of clothing at night, merely an edded "kutta" or sheepskin, against the cold. Aside from drinking cups, there are no individual utensils.

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542 Towns, including provincial towns, are centers for the spread of syphilis and other venereal diseases, due to the existence of entire streets of "women in-between marriages" who act as restauranteurs-prostitutes. When surface lesions appear, the native "wogasha" is consulted; or since the Italian invasion made the "needle" popular, the modern government medical personnel is approached. But patients usually cease to continue treatment when surface lesions disappear.[67]

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Eating "brundo", raw beef, at feasts, almost always leads to tapeworm and other taenia infestation. Fortunately

67. Guthe, Th: Venerial Disease in Ethiopia. W.H.O. Bulletin, Vol.2, 1949, pp. 85-138.

423 651 563 by claiming that the ethnics have unstated income from their handicrafts. Among the methods of this extortion is the "initiation fee" of as much as Eth$3.- per qada, when freshly cleared from the bush. Another impressment consists of "voluntary" supplies regularly paid to the Coptic parish church in the locality, by non-Coptic ethnics. Also, the feudal landlord usually asks them for a special "pasturage fee"--as much as Eth$2.- per qada of fallow land--with the further condition that no more than two oxen (or cows) graze on each qada. Where a Coptic farmer may pay perhaps Eth$10.- tithe on his semi-fertile 50 qada, the non-Coptic farmer may be made to pay double to four times that for similar produce on an equivalent plot of land. While [871] the new education tax is the same, the non-Coptic artisan finds it very difficult to enroll his boy in the overcrowded elementary school in the provincial capital.

423 651 511 The average "rest"-owning farmer working 10 qada every year, may harvest about 50 madiga of tyeff grain, selling it for Eth$150.-(In the rainy season it would bring twice that); plus 30 madiga barley, Eth$60.- plus some honey, if he has it.

If the tax-collector is his friend, his tithe may amount to as little as Eth$5 to 10, his education tax Eth$2 to 4. His land tax based on the rate of 1927 will be very low, and his pasturage, as Coptic non-artisan, free.

511 Thus he has enough for his basic needs including the purchase of a new toga (shamma) per year, and perhaps a new donkey. However, he cannot normally afford

511 prestige items of luxury, such as a mule, a fine saddle, and he would not want to "waste" his money on imported sandals. His expenses for shelter and furnishings are almost nil in terms of cash, and even a beer jar can be purchased for Eth$1.- in rural areas.

423 578 His basic needs filled with a minimum of labor, and his wants few, the "rest"-owning Amhara farmer views modern land measurement with suspicion. He fears that disputed land with vague boundaries will be declared government land and be redistributed. In the absence of written deeds; dependence on remembered local traditions and natural landmarks; and the practice of letting fallow land revert to bush to be cleared anew every few years, disputes are many at any time. Rumors from southern areas where courts have for several years now recognized tithe receipts as evidence of ownership, reinforces these fears. Alienation of any part of one's land is strongly objected to as loss of prestige and weakening of kin bonds. As a result, there is little appreciation among "rest"-holding Amhara of Begemdir for the efforts of the emperor, to replace vague "status" of land tenure with assured "contract", to have real estate deeds issued and registered, to end the tax exemptions of feudal lords and the church, to institute uniform land taxes, etc. Any general change, they feel, is bound to raise the socio-economic level of non-Coptic ethnic minorities and depress their own.

423 Several land laws were included in the Penal

5: Bruce T-5 (1768-1773) 1804
MP5 Amhara MP5

ning of a reign; which she could not do, until one of the nobles supplied her with a sum of money. There were only a few derims left in the treasury. 792

Abyssinian Harvests. They first sow barley from the end of April to the beginning of May, or later; that is, towards the first rains. This ripens in the rains in June; and is carried off the fields into the house, that it may not rot. Then they sow fitches, which likewise ripen in the rains after. In September they sow wheat, or teff, which is cut down in December; and, if they have water, they sow barley, or fitches, again in January. In Woggora (a very fertile province), there is seed-time, and harvest, and plowing, in every month in the year; water being easily diverted to the grounds. The rent paid to the king for the ground is one-tenth of what they reap, yet, with all this, they are all poor; for a harvest, at a medium, is about twenty after one; and they sometimes, nay, very often, scarce reap the seed. They never manure the ground; and there are great quantities of rats, and innumerable ants, that consume their corn at different, nay, at all periods of its growth. All their five harvests do not, in produce, equal one Egyptian one; and they are at five times the labour. In the several villages, living, in general, is very miserable; and, in general, people of consideration scarcely know any other diet than teff bread and bouza. Whether this teff is black, or white, is the whole difference between the diet of master and servant. 241 [511] [262]

Abyssinian Dress. The principal part of the dress of the natives is a large cotton cloth, 24 peek (cubits) in length, and one and a half in breadth, with a blue and yellow stripe round the bottom of it. This blue is not dyed; but the Surat blue cloths are unravelled and woven for this purpose; and the yellow they dye with sûf, the yellow thistle. The best for ordinary wear costs 10 salts, or 1¼ pataka, about 6s. 6d. English. It is called Kuara, as probably coming from that province. They are very beautiful and light. The other pieces of dress are breeches, which reach to their mid-thighs; and girt with a white girdle of cloth to the common people; but the better sort have red Indian cotton cloths for breeches; and silk, or worsted coloured girdles from the Levant. When they ride, they only hold their stirrups between their great and 291 [435] 492

[p. 45]

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

home—except for the difficulty of having to do without servants. Those students whose rural background and limited intellectual experience had led them to consider Addis Ababa as one of the most advanced cities in the world were often shocked by the comparison. No less shocking was the moral climate, which permitted one to express oneself freely and honestly. The taste for intellectual freedom was added to that of political freedom, as students whose horizons were limited by the meager intellectual fare at home came into hungry contact with authors like Marx and Freud, Dewey and Russell.

However much the Ethiopian students abroad might seek to lose themselves in the host culture, they were not permitted to do so. In the mirror of foreigners' regards, their identity as Ethiopians took clearer shape, transcending narrower tribal identifications. Questions about Ethiopia by foreigners aroused greater interest in Ethiopia's history and contemporary problems. A number of students were thus moved to dip into the literature on their country produced by travelers and scholars in the past, and some of them came to write theses and dissertations on problems related to Ethiopia's development.

All of these factors—broadening of perspective, acquaintance with a higher economic standard, less inhibited discussions, and greater self-consciousness as Ethiopians—contributed to a spirit of nationalist dedication. This spirit was confirmed or aroused in all but two groups of the returnees. One, consisting of children of some wealthy members of the new nobility, went abroad chiefly for the prestige and pleasure involved. For them the experience was an extended holiday; they were playboys more than students. The other group consists of those who were abroad for too short a time to have a complete educational experience—in some cases, for as little as three months. These students have tended to use the tour abroad chiefly as a weapon with which to lord it over their peers on return and otherwise to serve narrow personal ambitions. Those students, however, for whom study abroad entailed a more or less serious encounter with higher education and a more modernized culture normally experienced a swelling aspiration to serve their country. They returned home deeply critical of the status quo and determined to contribute substantially to the modernization of their society.

Ostensibly, the returnees have been well situated for making such a contribution. Thanks to prudent government policy since the early fifties, they have been enabled to enjoy a minimally comfortable standard of living. Given a monthly allowance from the moment they step off the plane, they have been automatically salaried at a scale based largely on the academic degree attained, with A.B.'s starting at Eth$450 a month and Ph.D.'s at Eth$700. In addition, provisions have been made for them to borrow money from the government in order to finance heavy investments like furniture or, more usually, an automobile.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

automobile. All this permits returnees to live at a standard which, while clearly inferior to what they enjoyed abroad, is well above that of all their countrymen except the higher nobility. Their income compares favorably with the prevailing monthly wages for policemen (Eth$25–$30) and district (*waradā*) governors (Eth$100), and not unfavorably with the salary earned by vice-ministers (Eth$1,000). Compared with the more sumptuous residences of the new nobility, their housing is threadbare, their staff of servants small; but usually their homes contain one or two modern appliances—a radio or phonograph, perhaps a refrigerator.

The returnees have, moreover, been shown deference from many quarters: from the modernizing sector of the public which, in its growing esteem for education, has adulated them as the most educated Ethiopians and, in the early fifties, regarded them as something of national heroes; from resident Europeans and Americans, whose perception of shared understandings with the returnees has flattered them; and from the government, which at the least has shown consistent concern for their economic security and at best has given them responsibilities and status that they would not be granted in a more modernized society without considerably more experience.

Despite such apparent advantages, however, it must be said that the returnees as a whole have so far done little either to modernize their country or even to establish themselves as a self-respecting status group. Their failure to do so has become one of the most widely discussed questions in Ethiopia in recent years, both among the more self-critical of the returnees and among critical Ethiopian and non-Ethiopian observers. Instead of being leaders of the new era, they have been little more than misfits in the old. If the central quality of the life of the new nobility has been anxiety, that of the intellectuals has been frustration. In the passionate words of one of them: "There is a wound, a boiling within each and every one of the returnees." Theirs is the frustration of modernized individuals attempting to live meaningful lives in a society that has remained essentially traditional.

The ideological aspect of this dilemma is that no synthesis of traditional and modern perspectives has yet been effected which has won the adherence of a sizable number of intellectuals and which could serve to energize their transformation of the status quo. Consensus exists only with regard to a vague sense of the inadequacy of the traditional system. There is no sense of direction. Partly this reflects deprivation due to maladjustment in personal areas, but it also represents a genuine cultural problem.

Foreign-educated Ethiopians return intellectually aware of the traditional nature of their society, but emotionally unprepared to cope with the tenacity of tradition or with the paucity of modern institutions and culture. The experience of culture shock seems greater when they return to Ethiopia than

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

571 365 178 [829] returnees has generally been sympathetic, and some of them have been quite helpful to individuals or groups of students during their hard pressed days as students abroad. The situation of action, however, has kept their degree of support of the returnees to a minimum. Three patterns of elder-returnee relations can be discerned: (1) The elder is concerned above all to maintain his position and, hence, to defend himself against any encroachment on his power on the part of younger people. This type has resorted to the various techniques of court politics—false rumors, libelous accusations, etc.—in order to check the influence of the returnees and have the more reformist among them transferred to less favorable positions. (2) The elder believes that if anything is to be accomplished in Ethiopia, it must be done by the educated young people, but he must be cautious in supporting the latter, for fear of getting into trouble at the palace himself if he offends any entrenched interests. Even when a returnee has been able to get the support of such a man for some reform, he may find when the time for implementation comes that his supporter has been transferred and left no commitment in writing for his successor. (3) While generally sympathetic to the returnees, this type fears the rashness and inexperience of youth and feels itself threatened by the prospect of being displaced. His apprehension is not aggressively expressed, but tends to take the form of discrediting the returnees by blaming them for every possible mistake. Whether due to the antagonism, caution, or ambivalence of the new nobility, the returnees have found relatively little effective support for their projected reforms. The ministers typically have shown them a progressive face and just as often have pursued a stagnant policy.

571 581 584 178 [562] Vocational malaise and ideological uncertainty thus reinforce each other. The cycle of frustration is complete when we consider the marital problems of the returnee, which revolve about the difficulty of getting to know potential spouses, financial handicaps, the changing definition of marriage, and latent warfare between the sexes in the modernizing sector.

571 584 834 178 Except for a small number of returnees whose marriages have had to be arranged ones because of political considerations, the foreign-educated men, and a few of the women, are determined to choose their own spouses. Getting to know a potential spouse, however, remains a difficult matter. The traditional mores prevail with regard to social relationships between the sexes. A girl who goes out with boys is *ipso facto* presumed to have a bad character, and many of the girls in whom a returnee might be interested are not permitted to go out by their parents. There are few places where a young man and woman can go together and have privacy. Those who attempt to follow the Western custom of dating have been embarrassed.

585 511 571 The cost of marriage presents another obstacle. The quality of housing that a returnee aspires to for his potential family is far beyond his means in the present-day economy. Other assumed necessities—an automobile, expensive

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

furniture, etc.—are equally burdensome investments if the returnee does not possess them. Furthermore, the traditional large wedding is still expected in most cases. In the city this involves an enormous expense—as much as Eth$2,000–$4,000—which often puts the groom in debt for several years.*

There are many returnees for whom these factors are excuses more than insuperable obstacles, or who frankly prefer the extended bachelordom made possible by the greater freedom of the modernizing sector to an uncertain match. If, as frequently is the case, they would marry only an educated wife, they may be discouraged by the shortage of educated Ethiopian women; or beset by too much pride, if coming from a humble background, to ask for the hand of an educated girl who is likely to come from an upper-class family. They may be victims of the cycle of antagonism that has developed between educated men and women in Ethiopia, the former attacking the latter for demanding too much in the way of material things and being only superficially modernized—"half-baked"—and the latter indicting the former for preferring foreign girls and unjustly neglecting Ethiopian women.

But the root of the problem is often deeper (leaving aside, for this discussion, characterological factors). It is entwined with a basic insecurity about the whole idea of marriage in the transitional atmosphere of contemporary Ethiopia. Perhaps nowhere in the minds of the returnees do traditional and modern norms stand in such delicate counterpoise as with regard to the question of the sort of wife one should marry and the proper type of relation to have with her. Should he prefer the traditional woman, modestly dressed and inconspicuous, or the Western ideal of a sexually attractive female? Should he have a wife who stays at home all the time, or one whom he takes along to social gatherings? Should he have a wife with whom to share interests and discuss problems, or one to order about and keep in her place? The returnees have normally been attracted by the Western marriage pattern while abroad, but it is so out of place in the Ethiopian context that many are troubled by the prospect on return. The foreign-educated man feels he should have an educated wife, but he also feels threatened by a woman who is independent, especially if she is holding a job. Such ambivalence adds an additional dimension of vulnerability to the returnee's position.

In sum: the conditions of life receptive to a modernizing intellectual stratum have not yet been established in Ethiopia. The personal frustrations of the returnees are an inevitable consequence of their being the bearers of modern culture in a traditional oligarchical order—especially one that has

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* A new custom has developed in response to this problem. It has become the practice in some offices for sheets of paper to be circulated prior to a wedding in the ministry or agency where the groom is employed. Co-workers write the amount they wish to be deducted from their salaries in their behalf. Most recently, modest weddings have started to become respectable.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

brothels for dancing and more intimate relations. (Returnees normally do not have patience for the shy, traditional girls; and they are too concerned about public opinion to be seen visiting brothels. When they or the locals do visit the brothels, it is often by way of a backdoor entrance.) When they marry, the locals almost invariably choose a traditional type of wife with relatively little education and with whom they expect to have an authoritarian relationship.

In sum: the local is not so afflicted by those problems which derive from the central dilemma of the returnee—how to fulfil himself according to modern standards in an intractable, traditional environment. The local's dilemma typically lies in a different realm, that of economic and social mobility. Whereas the returnee has been given a comparatively high income and status almost as a matter of course, the local has normally started his work life with a relatively low salary and little prestige. If the returnee has felt deprived relative to the Westerners in whose society he has lived, the local has felt deprived relative to the returnee.

The local lives on a day-to-day basis at a relatively simple standard. Though he shares the returnee's passion for woolen suits and, in many cases, for a car of his own, he is not, like the returnee, preoccupied with the quest for housing that conforms to Western standards. Except for those with extraordinary talents and family connections, the locals have had difficulty locating jobs that they feel are not beneath their dignity and which pay salaries sufficient to cover their relatively modest needs. They customarily receive a starting salary in the neighborhood of Eth$150. The more ambitious and fortunate among them have, by changing jobs, manipulating superiors, and improving skills, worked their way up to salaries in the Eth$400-$500 category. Some have become provincial teachers for a while, in order to accumulate money on which to live while shopping for a position in Addis Ababa and with which to influence some higher official to grant it to them. There remains a hard core of locals who feel they are underpaid and live in constant resentment of this situation.

This resentment has produced a general sort of negativism which characterizes many of the locals, a negativism expressed in the form of backbiting and denunciation of the higher government officials and the nobility generally. They decry social injustice and the uses of nepotism. They moralize profusely against those whom fortune has shown greater favors. But not all their social criticism is born of resentment. There are also among the locals many young men who are comfortably situated but fired by patriotic fervor with a desire for social reform.

The local is as deeply concerned about asserting his status vis-à-vis the less educated as he is to advance his position in the hierarchy. Locals are extreme-